

palestine perspectives

PER. DIV.

MAR 25 1981

NYPL

FEBRUARY 1981

VOL. III, NO. 10



Public Opinion and America's Bankrupt Palestine Policy



It is now quite obvious that official U.S. policy in the Middle East, and most particularly in Palestine, is bankrupt. It can not deliver what it promises. From the Rogers Peace Plan in 1970 to the Camp David Accords eight years later, when the United States associated itself in the process of conflict resolution, allegedly as a mediator, American officials have actively and deliberately sought to isolate the Palestinians and deny them the right to self-determination. Because of that, and only because of that, the Rogers Plan and the Camp David Accords, along with every other initiative in between, have failed to produce results. No one can seriously dismiss the Palestine question, which is the central issue at the heart of conflict in the Arab-Israeli dispute, and at the same time expect results in the form of a durable peace for the region.

The American government, in this regard, had come up with peace formulas that are desperately out of touch with the tenor of political life in Palestine which insured the failure of its initiatives. The U.S. also destroyed any kind of communication with the Palestinians by labelling their movement with slogans and symbols so as to diminish perceptions of its humanness and, indeed, its reality.

Now President Reagan is outdoing his predecessors in his attempt to mystify the public as to the nature of Palestinian nationalism and its leadership by identifying them as "terrorist." In part this is a consequence of Zionist and pro-Zionist forces that have made America's Palestine policy captive to Israel's demands (which seek a total negation of the right of Palestinians to freedom. It is also a con-

sequence of U.S. fears of what Israel (America's military Frankenstein monster in the Middle East) might do in the region to kindle the atomic flame were Israel "pushed" to adopt policies it does not agree with. In attempting to appease Israel, the United States has become a prisoner of these contradictions from which it has not been able, or willing, to free itself.

The issue is, still, more complex than that. The American public, according to innumerable polls that American officials continue to ignore, is shifting significantly to a pro-Palestinian stance. Hence a dissonance now exists between official American policy, and the declared public sentiment, on the Palestinians. So while official mind-sets about the Palestinians have remained frozen, uniform in their hostility to the aspiration of the Palestinian people for self-determination in statehood, there have been noticeable changes in the way the average American (whose tax money keeps Israel afloat economically and militarily) perceives the Palestinians. This sympathy for the Palestinians by the American public, though dramatic in the way it has transformed perceptions, both in degree and in kind, has not yet spilled over into, or affected, America's continued posture of hostility to Palestinian rights or blind support for Israel-right-or-wrong.

Potentially, however, it will, as it did in Europe where people are commonly more aware of, and more in touch with, the realities of the Middle East, a region that Europeans have interacted with for centuries.

There, already, support for the Palestinians has built up into escalating demands for the recognition of the right of Palestinians for freedom, a recognition

which has played a major role in changing the policies of the European governments.

These policies, which soon are to be translated into a concrete demand by the EEC for a new initiative, are now well-known.

Following last summer's fact finding tour by Luxembourg's Foreign Minister Gaston Thorn, as well as other continuing communication between various governments of the EEC and officials of the P.L.O., the Common Market countries are now understood to seek a comprehensive blueprint for conflict resolution in Palestine. The Europeans, who have always seen the now defunct Camp David Accords as going nowhere, will be calling for a number of important features in their initiative. One of these is Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian territories of the West Bank/Gaza, including East Jerusalem, and the dismantlement of all Jewish colonies established there since 1967. This is to be accomplished over a transitional period of two years, following which all Palestinians, under occupation and in exile, worldwide, will vote in a referendum asking them to choose between the creation of an independent Palestinian state or one federated with Jordan. As a matter of principle, the European initiative is also seeking to insure the right of Palestinian refugees expelled from Palestine in 1948, to return to their homes and homeland or receive adequate compensation should they opt for that.

This is a beginning. And it is a beginning that the United States government might do well to emulate, leaving its failed policies, and now defunct approach to Palestine, behind it.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I feel for the dear Palestinian people and wish I could do more.

I have had dear friends among the Arabs. I do pray that they will work together for good and that justice and peace will prevail.

We are so intimidated that we are afraid to write or express ourselves outwardly. I hope the good Lord will be on your side.

Sincerely,

Mrs. L.D. Campbell
Beaverdam, VA

Not long ago, I saw several issues of *Palestine Perspectives*. I was impressed by several features, most particularly your righteous and uncompromising stand vis-a-vis the Zionist enemy.

Various bourgeois spokesmen, both in the U.S. and abroad, have attempted to equate the PLO with terrorism and genocide. This is not only an insult to the PLO and the courageous Palestinian

masses, but to any person born with a human soul.

The foolish comments concerning the PLO by Ronald Reagan, A. Haig, etc., only emphasize more strongly than suspected their ignorance concerning the world situation.

Yours in struggle and friendship,

G. Shockey, Jr.
Sarasota, FL

Thank you for *Palestine Perspectives*. Although unknown to me except through the pages of *Palestine Perspectives*, I feel an affinity to the many who make *Palestine Perspectives* possible. These include those who gather and print the news and those in Palestine who suffer and who make news. I am especially grateful to the Palestinian intellectuals such as the mayors and university professors who appear to be the primary targets of suppression. These dramatize and help to keep the world informed of what is transpiring in their part

of the globe about which so little is printed. I am also grateful to the women who hold the families together, to the children who are the hope of tomorrow, to the men who work with their hands, and finally to the young men who are referred to by the Western press as guerrillas.

The spirit of change is in harmony with nature. This spirit is the weapon in the hands of Palestinians to fight oppression. Nothing can stand in the path of this spirit. Nothing is greater.

When expressed verbally or by use of the pen, this spirit is shared, transmitted, propagated. It can change the world, usher in a fuller awareness of the true nature of human beings where decency and dignity occupy their rightful place, and the bonds that bind the spirit are broken.

The news within *Palestine Perspectives* serves as a message of hope, a beacon in the night, an oasis in the desert, a foretaste of the rising of the sun.

C. Maria
San Diego, Ca.

Below is a letter written to the "Purdue Exponent", a student newspaper in West Lafayette, Indiana.

In this letter, we hope to be able to quickly improve communications and correct many misconceptions. For years, too many Americans took these for granted. But today, when the United States is confronting many regretful difficulties around the world, one cannot afford these misconceptions or the inevitable failures of a foreign policy based upon them.

The Arabs do not understand how the United States can officially and repeatedly state that the core of the Middle East problem is the Palestinian question, when, out of deference to Israel, the United States talks to everyone but the recognized representatives of the Palestinian people: the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The PLO is the legal representative of 4 million Palestinians. It is recognized by 115 nations, whereas Israel is recognized by only 51 countries. The PLO has been accepted by the United Nations, which created Israel in 1947. The PLO encompasses political, social, and cultural institutions and unions. Its key positions are elective. This, then, should be the first prerequisite for a Middle East peace; talking to the appropriate party.

The second prerequisite is the end of the Israeli occupation, now in its 13th year. Peace and occupation cannot coexist.

US MUST RECOGNIZE PLO

The third prerequisite is the restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people, who have been driven out of their country for 33 years or live under Israeli occupation. It is clear that the 4 million Palestinians are asking what 4 million Americans asked 200 years ago — the right of self-determination and independence.

A terrorist organization? The label is as absurd as calling the French in 1941 "terrorists," when in fact they were resisting the occupation of their country. After all, Israel's occupation of Arab land is denounced by every nation on Earth, including the United States. And wasn't Menachim Begin, Israel's prime minister, himself called a terrorist by the world when he headed a militant group, "Haganah," in the 1940s.

Israel has been defying the resolutions of the international community for three decades and denying the basic rights of the Palestinians. We believe Israel will continue to do so as long as it is rewarded by the United States with more than \$3 billion dollars annually in foreign aid. It is getting for its 3 million people a third of the foreign aid bill. The remaining two-thirds of the aid has to be divided among 1,449,000,000 people around the world.

By supporting Israel so uncritically, American taxpayers have in fact financed the occupation of Arab land, the killing of



Arab people, and the destruction of Arab towns and villages. By skillfully playing on the sense of guilt America feels for what the Nazis had done to the Jewish people, Israel continues to draw on U.S. support while defying the international community.

But Israel is now a land where the oppressed have become the oppressors. Official State Department reports confirm that the torture of Arabs has become systematic in Jerusalem and the West Bank.

If the Israelis are still blaming you for being silent about what the Nazis did to the Jews, do not be silent about what the Israelis are doing to the Palestinians. History has no need of another tragic chapter, an Arab one this time.

Muthanna Al-Durrah
President, Organization of
Arab Students

Abu Iyad: The Palestinian Struggle

Interview given to "Al-Watan" by Abu Iyyad of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

AL-WATAN: It is said that the Amman Summit has authorized King Hussain to speak with Reagan in the name of the Arabs?

ABU IYAD: We are not aware that the Arabs have authorized King Hussain to speak on their behalf with Reagan, unless this has happened behind the scenes. All of us are aware that Reagan's program is the same as that of the Israeli Labor Party. Frankly speaking, we will not agree to have King Hussain or any other leader speak on our behalf. We have reached full legal age and are capable of advocating our cause by ourselves and nobody, other than the PLO, has the right to speak on behalf of the Palestinians. It is true that we have a commitment to the Arabs not to seek a separate solution unilaterally but in consultation with them. We recognize this Arab right and we owe it to them. We would present the solution to the Arabs and it

would be up to them to sanction it or not. This should not prevent the Arabs from discussing the Palestinian cause, but the solution must be Palestinian. I believe that the Arabs are at fault if they have authorized Hussain to speak with Reagan. We oppose this step and believe that it will not happen.

AL-WATAN: How do you explain the statement made by the new U.S. Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, about the Reagan administration's intention to deal with certain personalities within the PLO?

ABU IYAD: First of all, we welcome any European or American party which recognizes the PLO. We would like to have a dialogue with America, but there is a difference between holding dialogue and pinning our hopes on it. I believe that the Americans have not changed their policy since 1948. Their policy is to ignore the PLO and even the Palestinians and any legitimate representative of theirs and also their cause and rights and, on the other hand, to give unlimited military and economic aid to Israel. These are the guidelines of American policy, and they will not be changed by

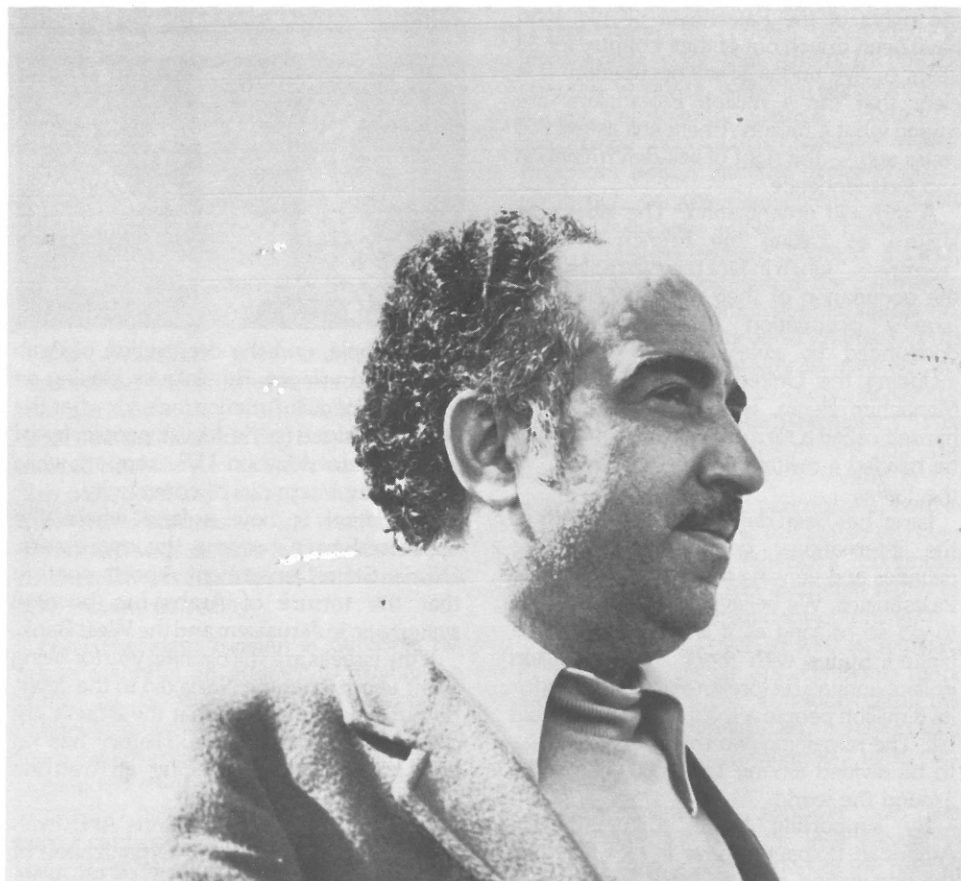
statements made by Haig or any other person. Meanwhile, they have no right to bestow epithets of moderate or immoderate on the Palestinian leadership. I believe that the fighters should not be described as moderates or immoderates. We reject dialogues behind the scenes or even the call for such dialogues. Whoever wants dialogue should hold dialogue openly. This talk of moderate and immoderate is rejected by us and is meant to divide the ranks.

AL-WATAN: Haig has stated that the PLO is not terrorist. What is your opinion?

ABU IYAD: This is a great and new step. I would like to say, however, that America and Europe have had the habit of designating liberation movements as terrorist movements; in the end, they are compelled to recognize these movements because they represent the will of the peoples.

AL-WATAN: Some Palestinian leaders have welcomed the so-called European initiative, while others deny the existence of such an initiative. Does this signify a double standard in the Palestinian stance?

ABU IYAD: There is no double standard, because a double standard exists when we both reject and accept something. As for the European initiative, show it to us so that we may discuss it. The fact is that some European statements are less extreme than the American statements. I challenge any Arab or Palestinian official to prove to me that a written or quasi-written European initiative exists. There is no initiative, and it is we who invent illusory initiatives. The Venice statement, for example, contained a line which said that the Palestinians and some members of the PLO must participate in any solution to the Middle East issue. A week later, the NATO foreign ministers met. U.S. Secretary of State Edmund Muskie came out to tell the journalists that "the good line in the Venice statement was deleted during the meeting." Thus we see that anyone who tries to draw a line between American policy and European policy is deluding himself. Europe may have political ambitions to establish economic unity detached from the United States. America is using its agents to frustrate and contain that ambition, let alone a European political aspiration. We regard what As-Sadat has done as a historical crime, because he has given Israel cover for any solution. This cannot change unless the Arab balance of power changes by mobilizing all the Arab capabilities, and it is then that Europe and America will seek a solution.



DEFAMING THE PLO

In the wake of the Reagan victory, it seems, that the American media, much like the new president, flooded Washington, D.C. with anti-Palestinian remarks and Israeli rhetoric. Following the hostage release, major newspapers introduced articles defaming the PLO, commentaries that referred to the PLO in negative tones, and even the 6:00 o'clock news eluded to "Palestinian terrorism".

The most astounding slander came from the *Washington Post*, long considered one of America's most respected and responsible newspapers. In response to various articles published in the *Washington Post*, Palestinian individuals and various Palestinian organizations wrote letters of protest to the newspaper, although only one article was published. The following letter exemplifies letters of protest sent to the *Washington Post* in response to those articles.

Since this newspaper was bombarded —

But you went recently to the other extreme of destroying your own hard-to-achieve image in the minds of Arabs everywhere, and you spilled your guts to placate the Zionist pressure groups and lobbyists in Washington.

You, first, ran an article by Moshe Dayan, who now advises us that "We should not have tried to free the U.S. hostages last April." Mr. Dayan himself and his colleague, Ezer Weizman, lamented and described the U.S. Administration almost as cowardly, because the U.S. did not consult with the so-called "Entebbe heroes," who were waiting for Uncle Sam to "beg" for advice from Israel in finding a way to free the Americans who were held hostage in Iran.

Later, you ran an article by some Claire Sterling, who spoke about the terror network. And on Tuesday, January 27, you ran an editorial "Fixing Responsibility for Terror," and awkwardly and with no rationale, you singled out the Palestine

which Robert Lipshutz, a former assistant to President Carter, who said, and you reported that in this newspaper, today, January 30, that: "President Carter rejected a "very enticing" proposal that might have freed the American hostages shortly after they were taken captive but would have meant de facto recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization, former White House counsel Robert Lipshutz said today.

[January 30,]

"Lipshutz said that at the suggestion of Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky, he and a New York attorney friend flew to Vienna and listened to a plan for publicly asking the PLO to intercede for the hostages, but rejected the idea after sounding out the Israeli government."

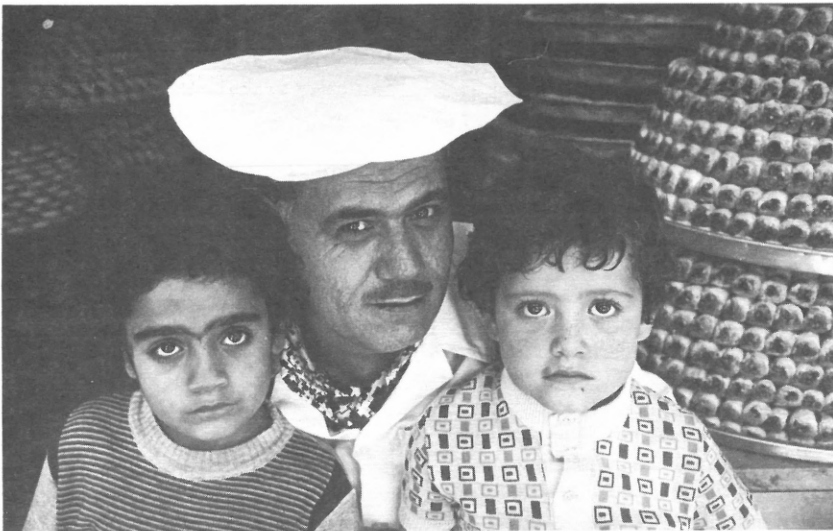
You see here; the American hostages suffered 444 days of captivity because the idea of approaching publicly the PLO was "rejected after sounding out the Israeli government. . ." and you come out, without any regret and remorse, and tell the PLO that "It deserves no credit for attempting to intervene for the hostages in Iran, when its larger role was to help make the terrorist assault possible in the first place."

You also did not report the truth, which you have watched on ABC 20/20, long before you jumped your guns on the PLO. Pierre Salinger, in his 3-hour television epic "America Held Hostage," brought to the screen the same Jewish European leader, Bruno Kreisky, who stated — and I paraphrase him here — "that it is believed that it was thanks to the PLO efforts that the first 13 Americans were freed from captivity in Iran."

The PLO came to the picture only after the U.S. Embassy was occupied by the Iranian militants, and not before that. Not a single confirmed objective report could prove otherwise. You are spreading unchecked and unfounded stories which will only aid further the angry elements that you are now trying to please.

If you want to contribute anything positive in the way of combatting terrorism, you should not forget other groups which have been identified as terrorists. This includes the Jewish Defense League, which is undergoing now an investigation by the Justice Department; because of its acts of terror against civilians and innocent people in this country and abroad.

A.S. Massarueh
Arlington, Va



One of many Palestinian families.

as you like to describe it — with letters of protest from American Jews when you published your correspondent's report from Southern Lebanon about charges that Israeli army mutilated the bodies of five dead Palestinians, you acted with unexpected speed to "beautify your image" with liberal American Jews.

You went from extreme to extreme. You were extreme in covering objectively events in the Arab world and events in the Arab-Israeli conflict, at a time that most of the U.S. media took a totally one-sided, biased stand in coverage and reporting about the Middle East. And for that, alone, you deserved kudos and congratulations.

Liberation Organization (PLO), and held it responsible for the seizure of the American hostages in Iran.

On all counts and points that you espoused in your editorial you were wrong, for the following reasons:

If you reported carefully and listened, before passing a value judgement on things, then you should have recalled what some of the American ex-hostages said, whether in New York or in Washington, about the role of the PLO in the whole affair.

This role has been recorded to the benefit and the good services of the PLO, as evidenced only yesterday, January 29, by the report which came out from Atlanta, in

Reagan and the Middle East

An important question remains unanswered: how will the new Reagan administration handle the problem of the Middle East and the Palestinian issue? The new President Ronald Reagan believes in a strong America which will stand up to any Soviet threat to its interests, an America willing and able to stop Soviet intentions to move southward towards the Gulf area. Reagan's suspicions of the Soviet Union and his perceptions of what the Soviets will do in order to further their interests such as world domination are the principle most important elements of his administration. How he and his administration view the Palestinian issue, therefore, is very important. Will the Palestinian problem be treated as one element within the East-West conflict, or on its own merit as a problem of a people in search of self-determination — the right to establish their own independent state on their national soil?

Early signs indicate that the Reagan administration will be spending much energy on its near-obsession of trying to stop 'Soviet expansion,' and thus the question of how the Arab governments — especially the oil producers — fit into this task is important. It appears that the Middle East is viewed by the Reagan administration only in terms of what it can and may contribute to the realization of American interests.

It is no secret that Ronald Reagan is barely familiar with the Middle East conflict and its intricacies. This is not to say that he is less supportive of Israel or less hostile to Arab Palestinian demands. His campaign statements, in fact, qualify him as strongly supportive of Israel, and his repeated declarations that Israel is of utmost strategic importance are well known in the American Middle East establishment. Generally speaking, campaign rhetoric is dismissed as just that, but when that rhetoric refers to Israel it is almost always translated into reality.

During his campaign for the presidency Reagan was interviewed by *Time* magazine, and was asked about Israeli settlements on the West Bank. His reply was a shocking one. He said that the settlements are not illegal and implied that U.N. Resolution 242 grants Israel the right to continue with its settlement activity! Of course, Resolution 242 of 1967 doesn't even mention the word settlement. If 242 has any implication on Israel's stay in the territories, it is a negative one, giving Israel peace and recognition by Arab governments in exchange for return-

ing the territories.

Election to the White House did not improve Reagan's knowledge of the Middle East. While he claims, as did many previous occupants of the White House, that the Gulf area is of utmost importance to the security of the United States and its allies, his lack of familiarity with basic historical issues there is especially worrisome. In an interview the new president granted the *New York Times* on Feb. 2, 1981, and which was published the following day, Reagan was asked if he approves of Israel's accelerated settlement of the West Bank. His reply proves that he hasn't improved his knowledge of this subject. He said that the "moral commitment" of the United States to Israel's existence is a priority of the first order "for the present."

In answer to the question concerning settlements Reagan said "As to the West Bank, I believe the settlements there — I disagreed when the previous administration referred to them as illegal, they're not illegal, not under the U.N. resolution that leaves the West Bank open to all people — Arab, Israeli, and Christian alike." One wonders what U.N. resolution Mr. Reagan is referring to. Obviously, no such U.N. resolution exists. What does exist are repeated U.N. General Assembly and Security Council resolutions calling on Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories.

Reagan's lack of familiarity with issues of the Middle East is not hindering U.S. activity in that region, because none exists there at the present. Camp David, the Carter administration's 'masterpiece' is being placed temporarily in the freezer of American politics while the new administration is attempting to define and rewrite U.S. foreign policy priorities. And although it has only been two weeks since the Reagan administration took office, it is already clear that it will not begin tackling Middle East issues soon. Its preoccupation appears to be with such issues as Central and Latin America and economic conditions in the United States. The continuation of the status quo is not particularly bothersome to the new American president.

With the prospect of the ouster of the Begin government in the upcoming Israeli elections, the preoccupation of Arab governments with their infighting and the Iran-Iraq war with its minimal effect on the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Reagan administration is focusing on issues which demand attention, such as those

concerning Latin America and the Soviet Union. It is agreed now in Washington that Reagan will not make a decision soon as to the need to continue on the Camp David road or not. Rumors about a change of strategy towards the Middle East, from Camp David to what has been called the 'Jordanian option' have been heard. But Anwar Sadat's opposition to the inclusion of Jordan, within the Jordanian option, was well publicized during Henry Kissinger's latest "private" visit to the Middle East. King Hussein reportedly refused to see Kissinger during his stay in the Middle East. It appears that the United States is keeping its options open with respect both to their timing and direction.

Conflicting reports are circulating in Washington as to the Reagan administration's relations with Israel. There are those who argue, and perhaps correctly, that no change of any significance will take place during the Reagan administration. These views elaborate that Reagan continues to believe that Israel is of "strategic importance" to the United States in the region, especially considering his policy of no compromise with the Soviet Union. Setting aside his campaign statements of total support for Israel (which have become a constant of every campaign by all candidates), Reagan states as recently as Feb. 3, "I think that Israel, being a country sharing our same ideals, I think — democratic approach to things, with a combat-ready and even a combat-experienced military, is a force in the Middle East that is actually of benefit to us." (Emphasis added.)

The American president's straightforward statement of the value of Israel and what it can provide the United States suggests that Israel is much more valuable to the United States than all of the Arab governments combined, and further serves as confirmation of the well established opinion that the United States cannot depend on Arab governments because of the nature of their forms. While the United States can and does have some influence on which leader or party should be backed or maintained in the Arab countries through provision of military and financial aid, they cannot influence to the same degree the process through which Israel chooses its leaders. Israel is thus perceived to be a cultural, political and ideological extension of the United States in its global strategy to gain friends over the U.S.S.R.

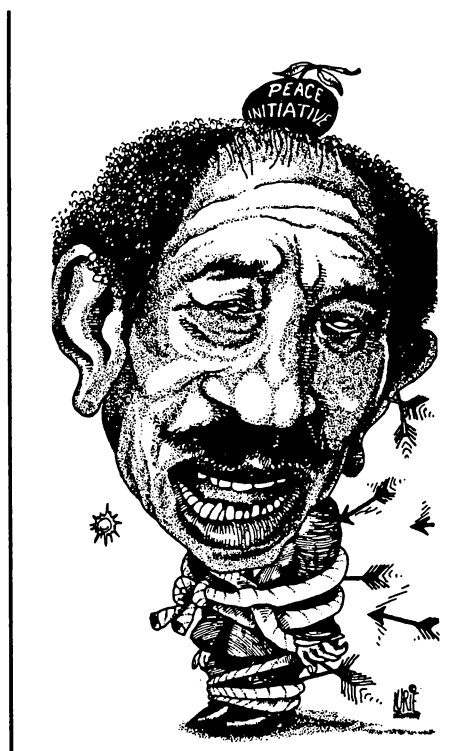
The Egyptian People Reject Camp David

Dr. Yehya El-Jamal, Vice President of the Unionist Coalition Party and an ex-minister in the Egyptian government, spoke about the Egyptian opposition to the Sadat initiative in Washington, D.C. this month. Following is a summary of it:

The Unionist Coalition Party in Egypt, headed by Khaled Moheddin, is composed of ex-Nassarites, Marxists, Arab Nationalists and progressive independent Egyptian individuals who oppose the policies of the Sadat government. They all demand real democracy in Egypt, and demand a solution to the grave economic problems which the country has. The party started as a small weak opposition, and it began to publish a newspaper, *al-Ahali*, which emerged as the main opposition newspaper and expressed the feelings and aspirations of the Egyptian people. The government banned the newspaper, and began a campaign of slander against the Unionist party.

At present, the Unionist party is trying to broaden the coalition and to create a Nationalist Front including ex-ministers and leaders, many of whom signed statements against Sadat's policies and expressed their support for the Palestinian cause, and demanded democracy and economic solutions to the problems of the country. The government, however, puts restrictions on forming opposition parties, and it does not give any press coverage to opposition candidates, thus making it difficult for the opposition to reach the masses.

Sadat's visit to Israel was supported by the Egyptian people when it occurred, for a number of reasons. The government was able to incite the Egyptian masses against the Arabs, and to blame Egypt's economic ills on the Arab wars with Israel. The government accused the Arab governments of not helping Egypt financially. The opposition to Sadat was then weak and divided. Sadat's visit to Israel promised three major changes to Egypt; prosperity, democracy and peace. People believed that after Sadat's visit to Israel these things would be forthcoming. But as time passed, the Egyptian people found out that these promises were not fulfilled. Peace did not come, and the Middle East was in its worst period of tensions and conflict. Egypt's withdrawal from the conflict upset the balance in the area and resulted in great instability. Moreover, the two super powers



were in conflict over the area thus increasing tensions.

As for prosperity, it became evident that only a few became richer. All the ills of the capitalist system appeared in Egypt; inflation, unemployment, limited income for middle class and exploitation and lack of values in transactions. Thus the economic gap between the different classes of people was widened and the middle and lower classes were caught in the great inflation.

Moreover, democracy and democratic participation was not allowed. The government dissolved the parliament and appointed a new parliament that endorsed the Camp David agreements enormously. Parties were banned, and a law was adopted preventing candidates from criticizing the Camp David agreements. Due to all these facts the opposition began to gain strength, and it is now trying to unify its forces and provide an alternative.

The Sadat government remains in power due to outside factors, over which it has no control. For example, parties were banned, and a law was adopted preventing candidates from criticizing the Camp David agreements. Due to all these facts, the opposition began to gain strength, and it is now trying to unify its forces and provide an

alternative. The Arab governments are divided and weak, unable to unify the ranks and face Camp David. Moreover, the opposition within Egypt is weak and divided. Also the U.S. government is providing Sadat with full protection and advice.

The Egyptian people, however, are aware of what is happening. They are now silent, but they oppose Sadat's policies, and they will move to put an end to the deteriorating conditions. The Egyptian people are slow in movement and revolution, but they are decisive when they rebel, as happened in history in the 1919, 1939 and 1952 revolutions. The masses today do not govern the means to revolt and they must face a regime that is strong and has all the means of control. But the Egyptian people will ultimately rise.

The people reject the normalization of relations with Israel, just as the government bureaucracy also resists the normalization of relations. Government officials do not implement policies concerning ties with Israel. Most of the professional unions, including the lawyers, doctors, teachers, and artists refuse to join activities dealing with Israel. Egyptian universities refuse to receive Israeli delegations. The Lawyer's Guild took a decision to punish one of its distinguished members because he joined a delegation to Israel. At the Egyptian Book Fair, the Israeli section was boycotted, and all Egyptian theaters refused to entertain Israeli President Lavon during his visit to Egypt.

Today, the Unionist Party's relations with the PLO are strong and genuine. The party leaders met with Chairman Arafat and other PLO leaders earlier this year in Beirut. We strongly support the Palestinian cause and we have called for full support for the PLO and the Arab struggle for the liberation of occupied Arab lands.

"This Year or Next, I Will Never be in Jerusalem"

Hilton Obenzinger has provided us with "This Year or Next, I Will Never be in Jerusalem", a refreshing, exciting change from conventional books that deal with Judaism in the context of the Palestinian dilemma.

Hilton Obenzinger has contributed a book of prose and poetry and provides his readers with unusual insight into the feelings of Jews in America. He does this in an intriguing combination of writing styles that immediately captivates his reading audience.

As the title of the book suggests, the author encourages through his work, an anti-Zionist, anti-racist perspective. Introducing alternative pages of poems, interviews and short stories, this book takes us from the exploits of Columbus to the struggle of the native Indian nation, to the opinions of selected anti-Zionist Jews, and concludes with a touching selection of batiks that reflect Jewish and Palestinian persecution.

This book is a discovery of Judaism in America and the meaning of being a Jew in America. Thus it is a search for the identity of Jews in America. Hilton Obenzinger effectively takes us through the antagonizing search for self identity and emerges as a progressive anti-Zionist Jew. His book encourages the cross-examination of Zionism by Jews worldwide. Through it,

the author provides the freedom for the analysis of Zionism and puts to shame the claim that Zionism is Judaism and Judaism is Zionism. He quickly makes his point clear; Zionism is an ideology, racist in its orientation and beliefs, and Jews and non-Jews alike must realize that Zionism is a form of racism.

"This Year or Next I Will Never be in Jerusalem" questions the legitimacy of the myth of chosenness. The idea that a particular people is chosen is depicted throughout history by various groups. The author suggests that it is often this misconception that leads to racist attitudes. In much the same tone, the author parallels the racism of the first Europeans on Indian land to the racism witnessed with European immigration into Palestine. On one occasion he writes, "Pilgrims, you'd make wonderful Zionists!"

The most significant contribution of this book is its availability. For it is one of a kind and it explores the connections between Zionism, Judaism, racism and the Palestinian struggle. It explores the problems of identity for American Jews and their relationships to Zionism and draws parallels between Zionism and other forms of racism. Hilton Obenzinger has effectively asked important questions and provided many answers.

In conclusion, an impressive selection of

batiks tells the story of the history of the Palestinian and Jewish peoples and reflects a common struggle against racism. The final batik in the series is entitled Jewish-Palestinian Solidarity and inspires a feeling of pride in the joint struggle against Zionism. It symbolizes the human determination to overcome any barriers in order to work towards a better world.

One sentence from this book sums up the essence of the relationship between Zionism and racism and Zionism in contradiction with Palestinian nationalism. Hilton Obenzinger writes, "Next year in Jerusalem delivered from bondage," as a statement against Zionism. For him, a visit to Jerusalem is conceivable only when the city of Jerusalem and world Jewry are free from the bondage of Zionism. This statement reflects the healthy differentiation he makes in his book between Zionism and Judaism. It brings to light a statement made by one Jew who said, "For Palestinians Zionism is a tragedy, for Jews a trap." In sum, this is the message Hilton Obenzinger relays to his readers.

To say the least, Hilton Obenzinger has shared with us a crisp, new, unique book. The topic he has chosen is one that is rarely written about but it is an area that certainly warrants investigation. In short, Hilton Obenzinger has written a phenomenal book that is certain to receive many rave reviews.



Batiks in "This Year or Next, I will never be in Jerusalem" characterize Palestinian & Jewish solidarity.

Tribute to Our Poets

TO THE POETS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Poets of the occupied land
your papers are immersed in tears and mud
your voices sound like the meanings of the
hanged
your ink looks like the blood on butchered
necks

We, the defeated poets
have been learning from you for years
We, the alien to history and to grief,
are learning how a letter resembles the knife

Poets of the occupied land,
You are the prettiest birds to fly out of
captivity

Pure, like the prayers of the dawn
You are the roses growing from within the
flame

You are the rain falling despite repression
and defeat

You taught us how the drowned can sing
from the bottom of the sea
and how the grave can stand and walk
You taught us how to write poetry
for our poets have already died
they serve as butlers to the Prince
they brush his coat and pour him drinks
they are castrated
alas, it is the worst kind

Poets of the occupied land
You are a sunbeam shining through the
door

You are a drumbeat marching out of the
wilderness

Your names are carved on our eyelids
What can we tell you, friends?
about the literature of the "setback" and its
poetry

We have, since June, been laying on pillows
entertaining ourselves with grammatical
rules

suppressed—but not opposed to
oppression

we mount wooden horses
and fight shadows and ghosts
and appeal loudly: Oh God of Gods
we are weak; and you are the victor and
conqueror

we are poor; and you are the giver and
provider

we are cowardly; and you are the forgiver

Oh poets of the occupied land
my nerves cannot endure
while the sanctity of Jerusalem is
desecrated
and Saladin is among the looted

and the daughter of Dayan rambles around
the altar
and we still call ourselves writers

Mahmoud Darweesh—greetings
Tawfiq Zayyad—greetings
Fadwa Touqan—greetings
You, who sharpen pencils on your ribs
we learn from you
how to explode mines in words
Poets of the occupied land
our "daraweesh" in the east
are still watching pigeons
drinking green cups of tea
If they stand beside your poetry
they would be dwarfed.

Nizar Qabbani

IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

For centuries
I did not hate
But now
I am forced to raise my untiring spear
In the face of the dragon,
To draw a sword of fire
In the face of Baal
To become Elijah in the twentieth century.

For centuries
I did not apostate

But now
I strike at the gods in my heart
The gods that sold my people
In the twentieth century.

For centuries
I did not turn visitors
Away from my door
Then one morning I opened my eyes
To find my food stolen
My wife strangled
And my child's back a field of wounds.
I recognized my treacherous guests.
I planted mines and daggers at my door
And I swore by the traces of the knife
That none of these guests shall enter my
house
In the twentieth century.

For centuries
I was only a poet
In the bands of the *Sufis**
But now
I am an erupting volcano
In the twentieth century.

Samih Al-Qassen

*The sufis were a Muslim group of mystics in the
Middle Ages.



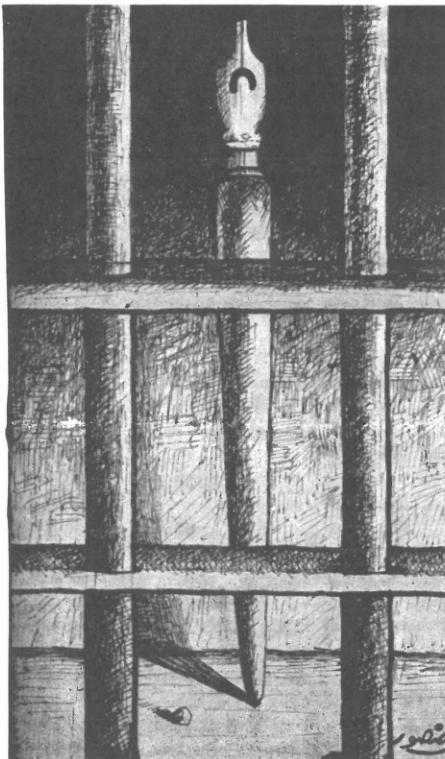
STUDENTS ON STRIKE

On February 5, Najah University in Nablus was surrounded by Israeli troops after students went on strike. The students went on strike to protest Israeli interference in the academic affairs of the university.

TEACHERS STRIKE ENTERS SECOND MONTH

On February 1, 52 teachers were arrested by the Israeli military authority. The teachers were arrested for violating a recently issued order that demanded the teachers end their strike.

For the second month, now, teachers from West Bank public schools have been on strike to demonstrate their resistance to Israeli military occupation. The strike is strongly supported by private school teachers and students as well as public and private bodies in the occupied territories.



ISRAELI AUTHORITIES PLACE RESTRICTIONS ON JOURNALISTS

As of February 14, the Israeli military authorities re-imposed a six-month restriction of movement order against the editors of three major newspapers in the West Bank. The newspapers are *Al-Fajr*, *Al-Shaab* and *Al-Talia*. The editors of these publications are, once again, confined to their hometowns.

BRITISH OFFICIALS TOUR THE WEST BANK

Eight British parliamentary delegates visited the West Bank in early February where they attended a series of meetings, receptions and toured various towns. During their trip, they were exposed to the realities of West Bank life after 13 years of Israeli military occupation.

The delegates were met at Allenby Bridge by four West Bank mayors including Mayor Basem Shakaa of Nablus and Mayor Karim Khalaf of Ramallah. Mayor Khalaf assured the group that the PLO is the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and that a Palestinian state would surely be established despite the difficulties faced by the Palestinian population.

At a Nablus reception, Ernie Ross, a member of the British parliament, said "we are not in a position to present excuses for the Balfour declaration, but we are seeking ways to make amends for the error". Earlier in the week, the delegation had visited Beirut and met with Chairman Arafat.

SILWAD UNDER CURFEW

In early February, the village of Silwad near Ramallah was surrounded and placed under curfew. Many of the inhabitants of the town were arrested by the Israeli military police after the assassination of an Israeli intelligence agent. Over the week, dozens of Palestinians were arrested and sentenced and one Palestinian, Mohammad Abdel-Hadi Fattah, was deported to Jordan.

ISRAEL LAUNCHES ATTACKS AGAINST SOUTH LEBANON

During the last four days of January, Israel engaged in ten separate heavy artillery bombardments of south Lebanon. This intense shelling has been viewed as a response to the Ta'if Islamic Summit Conference.

The worst of these attacks was the aerial bombardment of Nabatiya and the Burj al-Shamali camp. The south of Sidon and the region north of Tyre along the coast were also shelled, killing 29 civilians and wounding over 25.

PALESTINIAN EXHIBITION

On February 1, a group of Palestinian poets opened an exhibit of Arabic books on topics ranging from poetry, history and science to politics. The exhibit opened in Nazareth and extended over a period of 7 days.

JAPAN TO GRANT DIPLOMATIC STATUS TO PLO

The Japanese Government has decided to grant diplomatic status to the PLO representation in Japan. The head of the PLO office in Tokyo, Fathi 'Abd al-Hamid, was granted the status of diplomatic representative.

The Japanese newspaper YOMIURI SHIMBUN said yesterday that the decision will go into effect when Brother Yasir 'Arafat pays his visit to Japan in the spring.

ARAFAT RECEIVES MESSAGE FROM POPE JOHN PAUL II

Chairman Yassir Arafat, on February 4, received a message from His Holiness Pope John Paul II on the occasion of the new year. His Holiness the Pope wished the brother commander in chief and the Palestinian people continued happiness and success.

Chairman Arafat also received two greeting cards from Cardinal Casaroli and Archbishop Silvestrini.

The Pope's message to Chairman Arafat gains special significance since it comes following the third Islamic Conference summit in Ta'if, in which several Christian Arab delegations participated. These delegations reaffirmed that Muslims and Christians both cherish the city of Jerusalem and the just Palestinian cause.

ABU LUTF MEETS FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER

Abu Lutf, head of the PLO Political Department, on February 2, met with French Foreign Minister, Jean Francois Poncet.

The meeting dealt with the latest developments in the Middle East, especially Israeli attacks against south Lebanon. Also discussed was the third Islamic Conference and its results relating to Jerusalem and Palestine and the support given to the PLO and its national aims.

The meeting also dealt with E.E.C. efforts for peace in the Middle East and the need to develop such efforts in the near future.

During the two-hour meeting, the Palestinian delegation referred to the new U.S. administration's declarations regarding the Palestinian cause, which do not serve peace but hinder international efforts to find a just settlement in the Middle East.

Arafat Meets. . .

(Continued from page 11)

Asked about the compulsory military service announced by the Phalangist Party in Beirut's eastern sector, Junblatt said: It is not surprising that the Phalangist Party takes such a step, especially since it is trying to impose its control over all human potentials so as to expand its political and military influence. If the situation continues, we shall consider it necessary to counter the Phalangist moves by similar ones in order to check the Phalangists' expansion in all areas.

Literature and Resources

Video Cassette on the Palestinian Children's Folk Troupe, 30 minutes of Palestinian Song & Dance ... \$35.00
Colorful Christmas Cards from the Palestine Liberation Organization\$.50 each
Palestine's Poet — Abu Salma (in English & Arabic)\$1.00 each
H.I. Hussaini, *The Palestine Problem: An Annotated bibliography, 1967-80* \$2.00
James Zogby & Jack O'dell (ed.) *Afro-Americans Stand Up for Middle East Peace* \$2.00
Palestine Information Office, The PLO:

A Brief Survey

Documents & Statements, 1979 ... \$1.00
National Lawyers Guild 1977 Middle East Delegation, Treatment of Palestinians in Israeli-Occupied West Bank and Gaza \$4.50
Abdul Wahab Al-Messeri (editor) *A lover from Palestine and other Poems* \$3.00
Fawaz Turki, *Tal Zaatar was the Hill of Thyme* (poems) \$4.00
Fawaz Turki, *The Disinherited: Journal of a Palestinian Exile* \$4.00
Free Palestine, Tal al Zaatar; *The Fight Against Fascism* \$4.00
Hatem Hussaini (ed.). *Towards Peace in Palestine* \$1.00

PLO DENOUNCES KIDNAPPING OF JORDANIAN OFFICIAL

The PLO has strongly denounced the kidnapping of the Jordanian charge d'affaires in Beirut and described the incident as a regrettable one.

In statements published in Abu Dhabi today, Farouk Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, revealed that the PLO is currently searching for the kidnapped Jordanian diplomat and attempting to identify the party which carried out this operation.

During his short stopover in Dubayy airport on his way to New Delhi yesterday evening, Qaddumi had said that the PLO is participating in the search operations for the Jordanian diplomat, regardless of the differences that exist among Arab parties, because it believes that all diplomatic missions should enjoy immunity.

SUBSCRIBE NOW! Many readers have been receiving complimentary copies of *Palestine Perspectives*. Unfortunately, it is financially impossible for us to continue sending out so many free copies. To continue receiving the magazine, please fill out the subscription blank below. Don't miss the next issue of *Palestine Perspectives*—a crucial source of information about Palestine and its people!

I enclose \$10 for 12 issues of *Palestine Perspectives*.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Zip: _____

Please make checks payable to Palestine Information Office.

This material has been written, produced and/or distributed by the Palestine Information Office, 1326, 18th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 which is registered under the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as amended, as an agent of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Beirut, Lebanon. Two copies of this material are being filed with the Department of Justice where the registration statement of the Palestine Information Office is available for public inspection. Registration does not indicate approval of the contents of this material by the United States Government.

(ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED)

**palestine
perspectives**

FEB. 1981 VOL. III, NO. 10

A
Monthly
Magazine
published
by

PALESTINE INFORMATION OFFICE
P.O. Box 57042
Washington, D.C. 20037

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Brentwood, MD
Permit No. 3039